

**Oroville Facilities Relicensing Program  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project No. 2100  
Draft Summary of Cultural Resources Work Group Meeting  
January 25, 2006**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted the Cultural Resources Work Group (CRWG) meeting on January 25, 2006 in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary.

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees

### **Introduction**

Attendees were welcomed to the CRWG meeting and objectives were discussed. The meeting agenda and a list of meeting attendees and their affiliations are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively.

### **Maidu Advisory Council Update**

Janis Offermann representing DWR gave an update on the most recent meeting of the Maidu Advisory Council (MAC). She told the group that MAC attendees discussed the Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) and prehistoric site evaluation field work. She indicated that everything on the agenda for this CRWG meeting was also covered at the MAC meeting held earlier in the day.

### **Update on Ethnographic Evaluation**

Helen McCarthy, with Far Western, described the organization of the ethnographic report for the meeting attendees. She noted that the report is divided into geographic sections, with the first five currently being drafted: Enterprise, Upper Middle Fork, Upper North Fork, the Neck of the North Fork, and Foreman Creek. She said that the team had not yet worked on the Oroville Wildlife Area or other portions of the Project area below Oroville Dam.

Helen indicated that the ethnobotanical work would resume in approximately six weeks, when the plants begin to bloom, making identification easier. She added that a thorough study might take multiple years to complete due to seasonal and annual variations in plant growth.

Adrian Smith of the Kuksu Society asked about the availability of ethnobotanical lists, and how planning protocols would be developed. The CRWG then discussed how traditional plant gathering would be addressed. Eric Ritter of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) indicated they are working on a strategy to allow collection of traditional plant material on BLM lands and suggested that BLM and DWR coordinate on recommendations for gathering on federal and non-federal lands. It was noted that while Native Americans must obtain a permit to gather traditional plants, they are the only people legally allowed to gather plant material on federal or State lands. Helen explained that her efforts would focus on the identification of traditional plants used by local Native Americans and locations within the Project area where these plants may be found or propagated, but her report would not include specific planting protocols. DWR will provide copies of the completed ethnobotanical report to those who are interested.

## **Evaluation Reports for Historic Sites**

Adrian Praetzellis of Sonoma State University (SSU) gave an update on the evaluation reports for historic sites. He told the CRWG that all of the fieldwork was completed in December 2004. Since then, they have been working primarily on the report for the historic component of the McCabe Creek site, which will be sent to the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) when completed. Adrian said that they have also been working on reports that describe the other 53 sampled sites in detail. He expects to have evaluation documents covering these historic-period sites completed later this year. He told the CRWG that they anticipate producing a district evaluation sometime this summer and added that while they originally predicted they would find a total of about 400 sites, they actually located over 1,000 sites in the Project area.

Adrian Smith asked if the McCabe Creek report would include recommendations for future activities at the site. Adrian Praetzellis responded that one of their goals was to determine where important resources are located and how the McCabe Creek area could be used in the future for Project operational needs, such as debris removal, without impacting the site and any culturally significant resources. The CRWG briefly discussed whether McCabe Creek or another location such as the Bloomer boat-in campground would be an appropriate place for a Native American memorial or as an interpretive site for historic structures.

Eric Ritter asked about the possible need for subsurface testing to confirm National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) evaluations. Adrian described the approach to determine if a site is eligible for listing on the NRHP and noted that it isn't necessary to know everything that is on the site to determine eligibility. He feels confident that the team has a good idea of what is on the surface in the areas examined and a moderate idea of what may be below the surface, without extensive subsurface testing. Once a specific site is determined to be eligible, the appropriate level of further testing/investigation for that site will be considered if impacts are anticipated. One participant asked if the Nature Center along the Feather River below Oroville Dam is eligible for the NRHP and Adrian reminded the CRWG that those buildings are outside of the Project's Area of Potential Effects (APE).

Eric asked if Adrian felt that the sample of 53 sites was adequate for the NRHP evaluation. Adrian Praetzellis briefly described the process of proposing a district designation for the Project area and noted that the district boundary would likely be the Project boundary or the current APE. He noted that he expected most sites will be considered eligible, with some exceptions. He added that over the next five years, the entire project area would be surveyed. Eric asked if the APE might be extended in some areas. Helen McCarthy indicated that she has suggested expanding the APE for the purposes of the ethnographic studies to include Bald Rock and Springtown Mountain. Janis Offermann reminded the CRWG that a decision to expand the APE is a decision made by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and DWR cannot survey beyond their project boundaries for the archaeological studies.

Ellen Clark of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) informed the CRWG that three looters had been arrested recently, and that the State would seek prosecution of those individuals.

## **Update on Prehistoric Fieldwork**

Michael Delacorte of California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) told the attendees that the assessment report on the seven loci at McCabe Creek that were tested in November 2004 is complete and that his team is working to finalize the information tables. They also have completed testing at 4 of the 10 sample sites located in the fluctuation zone above 825 feet in elevation, and are waiting for the reservoir water levels to drop to allow additional fieldwork. He noted that work at one site was concluded when fragmentary human remains were found on the surface of the site. Michael observed that work at the other 30+ sites in the prehistoric fluctuation zone sample was likely to be conducted later in 2006 due to currently high reservoir levels.

Michael reviewed the nature of the sites tested, reminding the group that wave action and water level fluctuations have impacted site integrity in most cases, particularly at those sites below about 880 feet in elevation. He described the surface collection efforts that are designed to limit invasive techniques while determining presence or absence of cultural material. He also described a limited subsurface evaluation program and noted that approximately one meter of original sediment was found at one location. This is in contrast to many of the areas tested that looked fairly deflated, suggesting that most of the cultural soils that may have been present at one time had likely washed away. Michael described a site with considerable amounts of organic residue thought to be relatively recent but with potentially intact older components at greater depths. At another location, a single, tiny red and white glass bead and glass button was recovered. He said this site appears to be post-contact in age. In answer to one participant's inquiry, Michael told the CRWG that no clay pots or carvings have been found.

Michael mentioned that studies on obsidian procurement and use indicate that the Borax Lake and Napa Valley sources in the Coast Range seem to be used as early as 6,000 years ago. About 1,200 years ago, the Medicine Lake sources in northern California come into use, with obsidian from the South Warner Mountains and northwestern Nevada occurring more recently.

The CRWG discussed the potential to access and analyze existing archaeological collections such as those from CA-BUT-157, or to re-visit previously surveyed sites such as CA-BUT-84 to collect additional samples. Michael responded that he has not yet reviewed previous collections or other sites, but that he will be making recommendations for new analyses on existing collections that may be undertaken in the future.

### **Revised Historic Properties Management Plan**

Janis Offermann reminded the CRWG that copies of the revised HPMP were mailed out to CRWG attendees for review and additional copies were made available at this meeting. She explained that the document would soon be submitted to State and federal agencies, the Tribes, and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), initiating a 30-day review period. The HPMP would then be submitted to FERC for review. Steve Heipel of the Montgomery Watson Harza/EDAW team reviewed the relatively minor revisions contained in the latest version of the HPMP, dated January 11, 2006. He described the addition of Appendix A, the site table, and asked participants to review Appendix D, which identifies actions considered exempt from further cultural resources review. The CRWG discussed the types of activities normally exempt.

The CRWG discussed one activity under discussion in the settlement negotiations involving the placement of additional gravel in the river for spawning habitat and concerns that gravel disturbance might affect buried cultural resources in the river. Steve Heipel explained that gravel to be placed in the river would likely come from approved gravel sources and licensed gravel operations. However, there is no program in place to monitor changes to gravel deposits from natural river processes that may seasonally move gravels around during high flow events. The Facilitator added that any work to be done within the river would be subject to additional permitting through the State.

The CRWG discussed the meaning of the phrase "Cherokee Maidu" and whether this is a group that should be acknowledged in the HPMP. Helen McCarthy explained that the term is used to describe a geographic location (Cherokee) where a particular dialect of Maidu was spoken rather than to denote any relationship between the Cherokee and Maidu languages. She explained the study of linguistics and methods by which separate languages become affected by proximity. Helen added that she had contacted William Shipley, the author of a chapter in Volume 8 (California) of the *Handbook of North American Indians*, to clarify the issue. Dr. Shipley had confirmed that he was referencing the town of Cherokee where a distinct dialect of Maidu was

spoken, and that it does not refer to any influence of the Cherokee language on Maidu. Helen also had reviewed other reference material on the subject and, additionally, had discussed the topic with two Cherokee scholars at University of California, Davis who supported Dr. Shipley's findings.

One participant questioned why the Maidu were not described as “planters” in addition to “gatherers” as noted in the HPMP, and that they were also traders. Janis Offermann commented that trade is discussed in the HPMP, and she explained that planting is recognized by anthropologists as part of the gathering process to sustain annual yields.

The Facilitator reminded the group that SHPO has 30 days to comment on the HPMP prior to its submittal to FERC and suggested that if the CRWG has additional comments on the document, they should forward them to Janis Offermann at DWR.

### **Next Meeting and Next Steps**

Janis Offermann announced that this would be the last CRWG meeting unless something came up that required action by the CRWG. She thanked everyone for his or her participation during the past five years.